

THE
KINGS MAJESTIES
ANSWER

TO THE
PAPER

Delivered in by the Reverend
DIVINES attending the
Honourable Commissioners
Concerning
Church-Government.

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His Majesties Answer to the Divines attending
the Parliaments Commissioners, Concerning Church-
government.

C. R.



Is Majesty upon perusall of your Answer to his Paper of the second of October 1648. findeth that you acknowledge the severall Scriptures cited in the Margin to prove the thing for which they are cited, viz. That the Apostles in their owne persons, that Timothy and Titus by Authority derived from them, and the Angels of the Churches had power of Church government, and did or might actually exercise the same in all the three severall branches in this Paper specified; And so in effect you grant all that is desired: For the Bishops challenge no more or other power to belong unto them in respect of their Episcopall Office, as it is distinct from that of Presbyters, then what properly falleth under one of these three: Ordaining, giving Rules, and Censures.

But you presently after deny the persons that exercised the power aforesaid to have beene Bishops, or to have exercised Episcopall Government in that sense as Bishops are distinct from Presbyters; you doe in effect deny the very same thing you had before granted: For Episcopall Government in that sense being nothing else but the Government of the Churches within a certaine Precinct (commonly called a Diocese) committed to one single person, with sufficient authority over the Presbyters and people of those Churches for that end; since the substance of the thing it selfe in all the three forementioned particulars is found in the Scriptures; unless you will strive about names and words (which tenderth not to profit, but to the puzzling and subverting of those that seek after truth) you must also acknowledge that Episcopall Government in the sense aforesaid may be sufficiently proved from Scripture.

Titus 1.57.

Acts 20.17, 18.

1 Pet. 5.1, 2

In that which you say next and for proof thereof insist upon three severall Texts, His Majesty conceives (as to the present business) that the most that can be proved from all or any of those places, is this. That the word Bishop is there used to signifie Presbyter, and that consequently the Office and worke mentioned in those places, as the Office and worke of a Bishop, are the Office and work of a Presbyter; which is confest on all sides, although his Majesty is not sure that the prooffe will reach so far in each of those places. But from thence to inferre an absolute Identity of the Functions of a Bishop and a Presbyter, is a fallacy, which his Majesty observes to runne in a manner quite along your whole Answer: but it appears from the Scriptures, by what you have granted, that single persons, (as Timothy and Titus for example) had authority to performe such Acts and Offices of Church-government, as his Majesty hath not yet found by any thing represented unto him by you or any other from the Scripture, that, a single Presbyter ever

ever had authority to performe; which is enough to prove the Community of names in some places, notwithstanding the functions themselves are in other places by their proper worke sufficiently distinguished.

But for the name *Episcopus* or Bishop, his Majesty hath long since learned from those that are skillfull in the Greek tongue that it imports properly no more then an Overseer, one that hath the charge or Inspection of some thing committed unto him, as he that is set to watch a Beacon, or to keepe sheepe; whence in the New Testament, and in the Ecclesiasticall use, it is applyed to such persons as have the care and inspection of the Churches of Christ committed unto them in *Spiritualibus*; as both Bishops and Presbyters have in some sort; but with this difference, that where Presbyters are *Episcopi gregis*, only they have the oversight of the flocke in the duties of Preaching, Administration of Sacraments, Publique Prayer, Exhorting, Rebuking, &c. but Bishops are *Episcopi gregis & posterum* within their severall Precincts, in the acts of externall government; so that the common worke of both Functions is the Ministry of the Gospel; but that which is peculiar to the function of Bishops as distinguished from Presbyters, is Church-government. It is not therefore to be wondered if it should happen in the New Testament, the word *Episcopus* to be usually applyed unto Presbyters who were indeed overseers of the flock, rather then unto Church governours, who had then a Title of greater Eminency, whereby to distinguish them from ordinary Presbyters, to wit, that of Apostles. But when the government of Churches came into the hands of their Successors, the names were by common usuage (which is the best master of words) very soone appropriated, that of *Episcopus* to the Ecclesiasticall Governor or Bishop of a Diocese, and that of Presbyter to the ordinary Minister or Priests.

His Majesty hath rather cause to wonder, That upon such premises you should urge so much confidence as if the point were rendred most cleere to the Judgment of most men both Ancient and of latter times, That there is no such Officer to be found in the Scriptures of the New Testament as a Bishop distinct from a Presbyter; when as his Majesty remembreth to have scene cited, by such Authors as he hath no reason to suspect, both out of the Ancient Fathers and Councils, and out of fundry moderne Writers, even of these Reformed Churches that want Bishops, great variety of Testimonies to the contrary.

His Majesty is not satisfied with your Answer, concerning the Apostles exercise of Episcopall government, which you would put off, by referring it to their extraordinary calling; our Saviour himselfe was the first and chiefe Apostle, and Bishop of our Soules, sent by the Father, and anoynted by the holy Ghost, to be both the Teacher and the Governour of his Church. By that Mission he receiv'd Authority, and by Unction abilitie for these workes which he performed in his own person whilst he lived upon the earth, before he left the world, that the Church might not want Teaching and Governing to the worlds end; he chose certaine persons upon whom he confer'd both these powers, whereby they became also Apostles and Bishops, by making them partakers both of his Mission before his Ascension (*As my Father sent me, I send you*) and of his Unction shortly after his Ascension, where he powred upon them the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. The

Mission both for teaching and governing (at least for the substance of it) was ordinary and to continue to the end of the world (*Math. 28. 18. 20.*) And therefore necessarily to descend, and be by them transmitted to others, as their Substitutes or Successors. But the unction whereby they were enabled to both Offices or Functions, by the effusion of the Holy Ghost, in such a plentiful measure of knowledge, Tongues, Miracles, Prophecies, Healing, Infallibility of Doctrine, discerning of Spirits, and such like, was indeed extraordinary in them, and in some few others, though in an inferior measure, as God saw it needfull for the planting of the Churches, and propagation of the Gospel in those Primitive times; and in this (which was indeed extraordinary in them) they were not necessarily to have Successors. But it seems very unreasonable to Attribute the exercise of that Power, whether of Teaching or Governing, to an extraordinary calling, which being of necessary and continuall use in the Church, must therefore of necessity be the worke of a function of ordinary and perpetuall use; therefore the Acts of Governing of the Church, were no more nor otherwise in the Apostles, then the Acts of Teaching the Church were; that is to say, both extraordinary for the manner of performance, in respect of their more then ordinary abilities for the same; and yet both ordinary for the substance of the offices themselves, and the workes to be performed therein; and in these two ordinary Offices, their ordinary Successors are Presbyters, and Bishops; Presbyters *qua* Presbyters immediately succeeding them in the Office of teaching; and Bishops *qua* Bishops immediately in the Office of Governing.

The instances of *Timothy* and *Titus*, you likewise endeavoured to avoid by the pretention of an extraordinary calling. But in this answer by insufficiency thereof (if all that is said therein could be proved) his Majesty findeth very little satisfaction.

1. You say that *Timothy* and *Titus* were by Office Evangelists, whereas of *Titus* the Scripture nowhere implies any such thing at all; and by your own rule, authority without Scripture will beget (if that) but a humane faith; neither doth the Text cleerly prove that *Timothy* was so.

2. Setting aside mens conjectures (which can breed but an humane faith neither) you cannot make it appear by any Text of Scripture, that the Office of an Evangelist is such as you have described it; The worke of an Evangelist which *Saint Paul* exhorteth *Timothy* to doe, seems by the context (*2 Tim 4, 5.*) to be nothing but diligence in preaching the word, notwithstanding all impediments and opposition.

3. That which you so confidently affirme, That *Timothy* and *Titus* acted as Evangelists, is not onely denied, but cleerly refuted by *Scultetus*, *Gerrard* and others; yea even with scorne rejected of late, (as his Majesty is informed) by some rigid Presbyterians, as *Gillespie*, *Rutherford*, &c. And that which you so confidently deny, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were Bishops, is not onely confirmed by the consentient testimony of all antiquity (even *Ierome* himselfe having recorded it, that they were Bishops, and that of *Saint Pauls* ordination) and acknowledged by very many late Divines: but a Catalogue also of 27 Bishops of *Ephesus* lineally succeeding from *Timothy* out of good Records, is vouched by *Reynolds* against *Hart*, and by other writers.

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4 You affirme, but upon very weak p oofs, That they were from *Ephesus* and *Greet* removed to other places. Some that have exactly out of Scripture compared the times and orders of the severall journeyes and stations of *Paul* and *Timothy*, have demonstrated the contrary concerning that particular.

5 Whereas you say it is manifest from the 2 *Tim.* 4.9. and *Tit.* 3.12. That they were called away from these places; it doth no more conclude, that they were not Bishops there, or that they might as well be called Bishops of other Churches, then it may be concluded from the attendance of the Divines of the Assembly at *Westminster*, that they are not Parsons or Vicars of their severall parishes.

Lastly, for the Postscripts of these Epistles, though his Majesty lay no great weight upon them, yet he holdeth them to be of great antiquity, and therefore such as in question of fact, where there appears no strong evidence to weaken their beliefe, ought not to be lightly rejected.

Neither doth this lay any weight at all upon the Allegory or Mystery of the denomination in the next point concerning the Angels of the Church, as you mistake in your answer thereunto; wherein his Majesty finds as little satisfaction as in the last point before. The strength of his Majesties instance lay in this. That the judgement of all the ancient and the best Moderne writers, and by many probabilities in the Text it selfe, the Angels of the seven Churches were *personae singulares*, & such as had a Prelacy as well over Pastors as People within their Churches and that is in a word Bishops. And you bring nothing of moment in your answer to infirm this. You say truly indeed, That those Epistles were written in Epistolary stile, and so (as letters to collective or representative bodies use to be) directed to one, but intended to the body. When you have proved, you are so far from weakning, that you rather strengthen the argument to prove the Angels to have been single persons; As when his Majesty sendeth a Message to his two houses, and directs it to the Speaker of the house of Peeres, his intending it to the whole House doth not hinder, but that the Speaker to whom it was directed is one single person still. Yet his Majesty cannot but observe in this (as in some parts of your Answer) how willing you are *versari in generalibus*, and how unwilling to speak out, and to declare plainly and directly what your opinion is concerning those Angels, who they were, whether they were the great Antichrist of Episcopacy; *Salvatus* very preumptorily (*sic ergo hoc fluxum, &c.*) affirmeth the whole Churches; or so many individuall Pastors of the greater Church in these Cities, or the whole Colledge of Presbyters in the respective Churches, or the singular and individuall Presidents of these Colledges. For into so many severall opinions are these few divided among themselves, who have divided themselves from the common and received judgement of the Christian faith.

In the following discourse you deny that the Apostles were to have any successors in their Office, and affirm that there were to be onely two Orders of ordinary and standing Officers in the Church, *viz.* Presbyters and Deacons.

What his Majesty conceiveth concerning the Successors of the Apostles, is in part already declared, *viz.* that they have no successor in *eundem gradum*, in respect of these things that were extraordinary in them, as namely the measure of their gifts,
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the extent of their charge, the infallibility of their doctrine, and (which is sundry times mentioned as a speciall Character of an Apostle properly so called) they having seen Christ in the flesh. But in these things that were not extraordinary, (and such those things are to be judged which are necessary for the service of the Church at all times, as the Office of Teaching, and the power of governing are) they were to have and hold successors; and therefore the learned and godly Fathers and Councils of old times did usually stile Bishops the successors of the Apostles, without any scrupling thereat.

And as to the standing Officers of the Church, although in the place by you cited *Phil. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 3. 8.* there be no mention of Bishops as distinct from Presbyters, but of the two Orders onely of Bishops or Presbyters and Deacons; yet it is not thereby proved that there is no other standing Office in the Church besides; for there appeare two other manifest reasons, why that of Bishops might not be so proper to be mentioned in those places; the one because in the Churches which the Apostles themselves planted, they placed Presbyters under them for the Office of Teaching, & took upon themselves the care, and reserved in their own hands the power of governing of these Churches, for a longer or shorter time, as they saw it expedient for the propagating of the Gospel, before they set Bishops over them; and so it may be probable that there was as yet no Bishop set over the Church of *Philippi* when *S. Paul* writ his Epistle to them. The other, because in the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, the persons to whom he wrote, being themselves Bishops, there was no need to write any thing concerning the choice or qualification of any other sort of Officers then such as belonged to their ordination or inspection, which were Presbyters and Deacons onely, and no Bishops.

Concerning the Ages succeeding the Apostles.

1 His Majesty beleeveth, that although Faith, as it is an assent unto truth supernatural, or of Divine revelation, reacheth no farther then the Scriptures, yet in matters of fact humane testimonies may beget a faith, though humane, yet certain and infallible; as by credit of Histories we have an infallible faith that *Aristotle* was a Greek Philosopher, and *Cicero* a Roman Orator.

2 The darknesse of these times in respect of the History of the Church, is a very strong argument for Episcopacy; notwithstanding the darknesse of the times there is found so full and clear proof, by the unquestioned Catalogues extant in ancient Writers, of the Bishops of sundry famous Cities, as *Jerusalem*, *Antioch*, *Alexandria*, *Rome*, *Ephesus*, &c. in a continued succession from the Apostles, as scarce any other matter of fact hath found the like.

3 In *Clement's* Testimony cited by you, his Majesty conceiveth you make use of your old fallacy, from the promiscuous use of the words to infer the indistinction of the things; for who can doubt of *Clement's* opinion concerning the distinct Offices of Bishops and Presbyters, who either readeth his whole Epistle, or considereth that he himselfe was a Bishop in that sence, even by the confession of *Videliu's* himselfe, a man never yet suspected to favour Bishops, who saith, after the death of *Linus* and *Claudianus*, *Clement* solus Episcopi nomen retinuit, quia jam invaluerat distinctio Episcopi

Presbyteri; and for Ignatius Epistle, though some of late out of their partial disaffection to Bishops have endeavoured to discredit the whole Volume of them by all possible means, without any regard either of ingenuity or truth; yet sundry of them are such as being attested by the suffrages of antiquity, cannot with any forehead be denied to be his; and there is scarce any of them which doth not give testimony to the Prelacy of a Bishop above a Presbyter. Ignatius himself was Bishop of Antioch, and a holy Martyr for the faith of Christ.

4 You grant that not long after the Apostles times Bishops are found in the Writers of those times, reported as in some superiority to Presbyters; but you might have added further out of these Writers (if you had pleased) that they were some of them, as James at Jerusalem, Timothy at Ephesus Titus in Crete, Mark at Alexandria, Lynus and Clement at Rome, Polycarpus at Smyrna, constituted and ordained Bishops of these places by the Apostles themselves, and all of them reputed Successors to the Apostles in their Episcopall Office; And his Majesty presumeth you could not be ignorant that all or most of the testimonies you recite of the ancient Fathers, Writers of middle ages, Schoolmen, and Canonists, and the Book published under King Henry the eighth, do but either import the promiscuous and indifferent use of the names of Bishops and Presbyters, whereof advantage ought not to be made to take away the difference of the things, or else they relate to a Schoole point (which in respect of the thing it selfe is but a very nicety) disputed pro and con by curious questionists, *Utrum Episcopatus sit ordo vel gradus*, both sides in the meantime acknowledging the right of Church government to be the Bishops alone, and not in the Presbyters; as also there may be produced either from the very same Writers, or from others of as good Authority or credit, testimonies both for number and clearnesse far beyond those by you mentioned, to assert the three different degrees or Orders (call them whether you will) of Ecclesiasticall Functions, viz. the Bishop, the Presbyter, and the Deacon.

As to that which you adde lastly, concerning the difference between Primitive Episcopacy and the present Hierarchy, albeit his Majesty doth conceive that the accessions or additions granted by the favour of his Royall Progenitors, for the enlarging of the power or priviledges of Bishops, have made, or indeed can make the Government really and substantially to differ from what formerly it was, no more then the addition of Armes or Ornaments can make a body really and substantially to differ from it selfe naked or destituted of the same; nor can think it either necessary or yet expedient, that the elections of the Bishops and some other circumstantials touching their persons or Office should be in all respects the same under Christian Princes, as it was when Christians lived among Pagans, and under persecution; yet his Majesty so far approveth of your Answer in that behalfe, that he thinketh it well worthy the studies and endeavours of Divines of both opinions, laying aside emulation and private interests to reduce Episcopacy and Presbytery into such a well proportioned form of superiority and subordination, as may best resemble the Apostolicall and Primitive times, so far forth as the different condition of the times, and the exigents of all considerable circumstances will admit, so as the power of Church government in the particular of ordination which

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is meerly spirituall, may remaine authoritatively in the Bishop, but that power not to be exercised without the concurrence or assistance of his Presbytery, as *Timothy* was ordained by the authority of *S. Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. but with the concurrence or assistance of his Presbytery, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. Other powers of Government which belong to Jurisdiction (though they are in the Bishops, as before is exprest) yet the outward exercise of them may be ordered and disposed, or limited by the Sovereigne power to which by the Laws of the place, and the acknowledgement of the Clergy they are subordinate; but his Majesty doubteth whether it be in your power to give him any perfect assurance, that in the desired abolition of the present Hierarchy, the utter abolishing of Episcopacy, and consequently of Presbytery, is neither included nor intended.

As to the last part of his Majesties Paper, his Majesty would have been better satisfied if you had been more particular in your Answer thereunto; you tell him in generall, that there are Substantials in Church-government appointed by Christ &c. but you neither say what these Substantials are, nor in whose hands they are left; whereas his Majesty expected that you would have declared your opinions cleerly, whether Christ or his Apostles left any certain form of Government to be observed in all Christian Churches; then, whether the same binds all Churches to the particular observation thereof; or whether they may upon occasion alter the same, either in whole or in part. Likewise whether that certain form of Government which Christ and his Apostles have appointed as perpetuall and unalterable (if they have appointed any such at all) be the Episcopal, or the Presbyterian Government, or differing from them both.

And whereas in the conclusion you beseech his Majesty to looke rather to the originall of Bishops, then to their Succession, his Majesty thinks it needfull to look at both, especially since their succession is the best clue, the most certaine and ready way to finde out their originall.

His Majesty having returned you this answer, doth professe, that as whatever is of weight in yours, shall have influence on him; so he doubts not but somewhat may appeare to you in His, which was not so cleer to you before; and if this debate may have this end, that it dispose others to the temper of accepting reason, as it shall him of endeavouring to give satisfaction in all he can to the two Houses, his Majesty believes though it hath taken up, it hath not mis-spent his time.

Newport, Octob. 6. 1648.

F I N I S.
